

NEWS RELEASE



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For Immediate Release

**MANAGER OF DRUG TRAFFICKING NETWORK RELATED TO
NARCOTICS TUNNEL SENTENCED TO 120 MONTHS IN CUSTODY**

NEWS RELEASE SUMMARY - September 27, 2004

United States Attorney Carol C. Lam announced that defendant Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos was today sentenced by United States District Court Judge Marilyn L. Huff to 120 months in custody, followed by four years of supervised release, on drug trafficking charges. Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos pled guilty on January 14, 2004, to possession of approximately 3,300 pounds of marijuana with intent to distribute, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Section 841(a)(1).

The charges to which the defendant pled guilty arose from events that occurred on April 4, 2003, when United States Border Patrol agents found a tunnel under the United States - Mexico border. When Border Patrol agents entered a parking lot known as "Seven Dollar Parking Lot," located approximately 200 yards west of the San Ysidro Port of Entry, on that date they noticed a strong marijuana odor emanating from a white Chevy cargo truck parked in the southern end of the commercial lot, approximately 100 feet north of

the border. The white cargo truck was equipped with a 10x8 foot cargo box. The agents opened the locked cargo box with the keys in Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos' possession and discovered approximately 374 packages of marijuana, totaling approximately 3,300 pounds. Inside the cargo box of the truck, agents discovered a hidden hatch on the floorboard inside the cargo area. The truck was parked in such a way as to position the hidden hatch on the floorboard over a storm drain, which led the agents to search the area around the truck. The agents followed the storm drain that led to the discovery of the tunnel. Agents arrested Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos and co-defendant Juan Manuel Burgos-Solis at the scene.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Sherri Walker Hobson, who prosecuted the case, Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos admitted as part of his guilty plea that he was an organizer, leader, manager, or supervisor of the criminal activity. On March 26, 2004, co-defendant Burgos-Solis pled guilty to the same charge to which Ibarra-Castellanos entered his guilty plea. Burgos-Solis sentenced on August 27, 2004 to 63 months in custody.

DEFENDANT

Carlos Ibarra-Castellanos

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Title 21, United States Code, Section 841 – Possession of marijuana with intent to distribute

Maximum penalty per count: mandatory minimum term of 10 years to life in custody;

fine of \$4,000,000; five years of supervised release.

AGENCIES

United States Border Patrol

Drug Enforcement Administration

Immigration and Customs Enforcement